(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the reasons for rejecting the proposal by Pakistan Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) During the Foreign Secretary level talks held in Islamabad in December 2004, India had proposed to Pakistan designating places at Poonch, Mendhar, Suchetgarh, Uri and Tangdhar along the International Border and LoC where relatives and divided families from both sides could come and meet.

During President Musharraf's visit to India in April 2004, Pakistan agreed to pursue further measures to enhance interaction and cooperation across the LoC, including agreed meeting points for divided families. Government has subsequently initiated action for early implementation of these measures.

Using postman as data collector

*175. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Postal Department was established 150 years ago, and at that time no one would have believed that by 21st century, besides distributing letters, postman would knock at your door to collect consumer data;

(b) if so, whether in that pilot project, postal department has collected a fairly comprehensive database of utilization of Fast Moving Consumable Goods (FMCG) products telecome services and using postman as data collectors;

(c) if so, by what time this scheme is likely to be introduced throughout the country;

(d) to what extent, it has been welcomed by all; and

(e) to what extent, data has so far been collected in various parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) and (b) Postmen are occasionally utilized for activities in addition to delivery, as they have extensive

extensive knowledge of areas served by them. They have carried out surveys for Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Registrar General of India, checked addresses for Election Commission of India etc. and also collected consumer data for a pilot project for utilization of FMCG products etc., in Hyderabad and Bangalore.

(c) There is no plan at present to undertake the data collection as in the pilot project at Hyderabad and Bangalore throughout the country.

(d) and (e) The utilization of Postmen for carrying out of surveys etc. has been generally welcomed. The database collected pertaining to the cities of Hyderabad and Bangalore has been used by business customers, whenever they required.

Modernisation of Ports

*176. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state the steps taken so far to expand or modernise various ports like Karwar, Bhatkal, Honnavar, Malpe etc.?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): The ports at Karwar, Bhatkal, Honnavara and Malpe are minor ports located in the State of Karnataka. There are six other minor ports in the State, namely, Belikeri, Tadri, Kundapur, Hangarakatta, Padubidri and Old Mangalore.

Under the Indian Ports Act, 1908, the respective State Governments have overall jurisdiction on minor ports and are responsible for their development. The information furnished by the Government of Karnataka on development of minor ports in that State is annexed as Statement.

Statement

Information regarding development of minor ports in Karnataka

The ports of Malpe, Old Mangalore, Karwar, Hangarakatta and Kundapur are having fisheries berths and the following activities are in progress:—

(i) Construction of II Stage Commercial Warf at Old Mangalore port costing Rs. 6 crores.

(ii) Construction of Commercial Wharf at Malpe costing Rs. 160 lakhs.

(iii) Deepening of entry channel at Bhatkal port approved under Assistance to States for Development of Export Infrastructure (ASIDE) scheme for Rs. 79 lakhs.